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Sept. 7, 2017

The Honorable Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
Office of the Speaker  
H-232 Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Majority Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-107 Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
Office of the Democratic Leader  
H-204 Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steny Hoyer  
Democratic Whip  
U.S. House of Representatives  
H-148 Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

VIA EMAIL

Dear Speaker Ryan, Majority Leader McCarthy, Minority Leader Pelosi and Whip Hoyer:

As leaders of the Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council and Minnesota Chamber of Commerce, representing 55,000 workers and 2,300 businesses, respectively, we write in support of Congressman Nolan's H.R. 3115, the Superior National Forest Land Exchange Act of 2017, as amended, and ask for its timely consideration on the House floor.

We are pleased and encouraged with the swift manner in which the bill has moved under regular order through the House to date. It's a testament to the intense regulatory and public scrutiny the land exchange has already been subjected to, its bipartisan backing, and the need for responsible copper-nickel mining – and the jobs and economic prosperity it will generate. Congressman Nolan introduced the bill on June 29, it was heard in the Subcommittee on Federal Lands July 9, was subsequently voted out of the full Committee on Natural Resources on a bipartisan 26-10 vote. On September 1st, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that enacting the legislation would have no significant effect on the federal budget. Swift treatment on the House floor will maintain this momentum.

The purpose of this bill, however, is not to greenlight a mining project, but rather to ratify what the Forest Service already determined during its exhaustive environmental review and public input process – that the land exchange is in the public's best interest. H.R. 3115 requires the U.S. Forest Service to complete the NorthMet land exchange expeditiously.

This bill also is not intended to circumvent established process in any way. The NorthMet Project and land exchange have undergone a comprehensive environmental review as required by the National Environmental Policy Act and the Minnesota Environmental Policy Act. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources first validated the Final Environmental Impact Statement in March 2016 followed by the U.S. Forest Service Final Record of Decision in January of this year. Yet, the land exchange still has not been finalized.

The time has come to close out this exchange. We need your leadership to help end the unnecessary lawsuits against the federal government, and to

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bring this responsible company one step closer to providing hundreds of jobs, including 2 million construction hours over 18-24 months, and an annual \$515 million boost to the St. Louis County economy.

We appreciate the rapid pace with which H.R. 3115 has moved through the House to date and urge Leadership to exercise its full authority to bring the bill to a full vote on the Floor as soon as possible.



Harry Melander  
Founding Member, Jobs for  
Minnesotans  
President, Minnesota Building and  
Construction Trades Council



Doug Loon  
Founding Member, Jobs for  
Minnesotans  
President, Minnesota Chamber of  
Commerce

*Jobs for Minnesotans, a coalition representing business, labor and communities, supports statewide opportunities for prosperity and middle-class jobs from sustainable natural resource development in Minnesota. The organization is committed to the principle that our state can preserve both job opportunities and the environment for future generations. Jobs for Minnesotans was co-founded in 2012 by the Minnesota Building and Construction Trades Council representing 55,000 workers and the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce representing 2,300 companies and 500,000 employees.*